

The Army Interview

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Headquarters
United States Army Recruiting Command
1307 3rd Avenue
Fort Knox, Kentucky 40121-2726

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Contents

	Page
VIGNETTES	ii
PREFACE	iii
General	1
Qualities to Counsel Effectively	2
Counseling Skills	5
Pitfalls	7
Counseling Process	7
Need for the Army Interview	8
Prepare for the Counseling	8
Conduct Counseling - The Army Interview	10
Transactional Versus Transformational Leadership	10
Opening - Building Trust and Credibility and Telling the Army Story	11
State the Reason for the Counseling	11
Tell the Army Story	12
Goal Setting	12
Identify or Establish the Prospect's Goals	13
Facts and Assumptions	13
Qualifications	14
Generate Alternatives	14
Analyze and Compare the Alternatives	15
Make a Decision and Work Through Obstacles	15
Execute the Decision	17
Followup	17
Summary	17
Discussion	26
GLOSSARY	Glossary-1

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Vignettes

	Page
Cultural Awareness — SSG Turner	3
Trust, Credibility, and the Recruiting Environment — SFC House	4
Active Listening — SSG Turner	6
Presenting Alternatives and Establishing Long-Term Relationships — SSG Turner	16
Army Interview Model	17

Preface

The United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) is charged with the responsibility of manning an Army capable of full spectrum operations in war and military operations other than war, as well as keeping the Army connected to America. With a mission of this magnitude the command must deploy, employ, and exploit all available assets in such a manner as to dominate every market area ensuring mission success.

Recruiting leaders, at every level, must thoroughly understand and be able to apply this doctrine. Their ability to be adaptive, responsive, and flexible in an ever changing operational environment is imperative for mission success.

PURPOSE

USAREC Manual 3-01-1 establishes the foundation for conducting an Army interview. This doctrine will focus leaders on counseling, coaching, and mentoring techniques necessary to effectively convey the Army story to the public. It is the leader's tool for self-development in the art and science of recruiting; it is built upon the proven theories of leadership and counseling techniques rooted in actual recruiting experience.

APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

USAREC Manual 3-01-1 is applicable to all Soldiers and leaders assigned to USAREC. This manual establishes communication doctrine for all members of USAREC. This is the conceptual approach leaders employ when communicating with the general public. It sets the tone for establishing professional relationships through the effective use of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The proponent for this manual is the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3. Send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to HQ USAREC, ATTN: RCRO-T, 1307 3rd Avenue, Fort Knox, KY 40121-2726.

Unless stated otherwise, masculine nouns or pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.

The Army Interview

GENERAL

1. The Army's future rests on the shoulders of the recruiters who are charged with the responsibility to find leads, turn those leads into prospective Soldiers (prospects), qualify those prospects as applicants, lead those applicants to commit to and join the Army, and ultimately, access on active duty status. Future Soldiers are not "sold" an Army enlistment. Although there are many similarities between "sales" and "leadership," recruiters who embody the Army's leadership philosophy accomplish their mission and always achieve greater results. Recruiters lead prospects through the decisionmaking process by using the same leadership and counseling techniques that they used to develop their subordinates in the Army. The traditions of commitment, dedication, determination, and character continue in today's all-volunteer force. Americans volunteer to serve their country in the profession of arms. They serve for a broad variety of reasons. They are neither forced nor compelled to serve except by commitment to their fellow citizens and their Nation. With this in mind, perhaps the most meaningful lines of the Declaration of Independence with respect to The Army are not the first lines, but the last:

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor. (FM 1.)

2. Whether a recruiter is an officer, noncommissioned officer (NCO), or a civilian who is contracted to support the recruiting mission, the Army empowers them to lead Future Soldiers and build the Nation's Army. The US Army awards the Recruiter Badge to NCOs who have proven their value as Army leaders and have passed the rigors of one of the toughest programs of instruction in the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, the Army Recruiter Course. By awarding the Recruiter Badge, the US Army entrusts its best and brightest NCOs with the power to find, lead, counsel, and mentor the Future Soldiers of this great country. By awarding a contract to a corporate organization, the Army bestows the same trust on the professionals hired by that organization to support the recruiting mission.

3. The title of recruiter applies to every person entrusted with the mission to recruit for the Army. The responsibility is great, it demands that the recruiter live the seven Army values and commit to the warrior ethos at all times. A recruiter's adherence to Army values and commitment to do his best is the basis of the warrior ethos. It is this frame of mind whereby recruiters will not quit until they have accomplished their mission. It compels recruiters to work through any condition to achieve victory, regardless of how long it takes and no matter how much effort is required. It is professional attitude that inspires all recruiters to fulfill their obligations, regardless of the obstacles. The success of USAREC rests in the hands of these professionals—the command's ultimate recruiting system. Recruiters are proud to be the face of the Army at all times, ready to present their Army story, and effectively conduct the Army interview to all that give audience.

Counseling is a type of communication that leaders use to empower Soldiers to achieve goals. It is much more than providing feedback or direction. Leaders must provide each of its Soldiers with the best possible road map to success. (FM 22-100, app C.)

4. The Army interview is the specific adaptation of developmental counseling techniques in a recruiting environment. It can be adapted to any situation, to include prospecting operations. In order to effectively conduct the Army interview and tell an Army story, recruiters must first understand, and then master, the art of effective counseling. Every leader in the Army has counseled a Soldier during their career. Every Soldier receives counseling during their career. Recruiters use their experience in counseling techniques, leadership abilities, and the Army's counseling process to lead a person, over whom they have no military authority, to commit to joining the Army.

5. Telling an Army story is paramount to the success of every recruiter. Telling an Army story becomes a way of life for all members of USAREC. This story is presented to anyone whom recruiters or leaders meet. An Army story consists of a recruiter's experience, the Army's history, the Army's benefits, or other information required by the recruiter's audience. When applied consistently and appropriately, recruiters tell the Army's story and become the Army's most effective advertising tool. All members of USAREC will tell their story within their recruiting environment at every opportunity.

6. The recruiting environment is Main Street USA, the family living room, and a college campus. It is all these places and more. The recruiting environment is where recruiters work to contact the target market of 17- to 24-year old males. Recruiters should take full advantage of every chance to tell their Army story to targets of opportunity, including individuals who will never enlist but could influence others to enlist. Recruiters must be flexible and able to adapt their Army story and the Army interview to any situation. Similar to hip-pocket training in the Army, recruiters should tailor their Army story and prepare themselves to speak to potential Soldiers, parents, teachers, and community influencers about the advantages of the Army. These hip-pocket Army stories are presented at impromptu meetings, to a class of college or high school students at a moment's notice, or as a way to thoughtfully answer questions from an interested person who is curious about the military.

QUALITIES TO COUNSEL EFFECTIVELY

7. There are no easy answers or guides that outline exactly what to do in all leadership situations and counseling sessions. Recruiters use the Army's basic tenets of leadership taught to them throughout their careers to conduct meaningful Army interviews. These tenets are outlined in FM 22-100 and include respect for the individual, self-awareness, cultural awareness and understanding, credibility, and empathy.

As an Army leader, you show respect for subordinates when you allow them to take responsibility for their own ideas and actions. (FM 22-100, app C.)

8. Recruiters develop trust and credibility with their community and prospective Future Soldiers by being honest and consistent in their statements and actions. This can be as simple as showing up at the same place at the same time on the same day of the week. Trust and credibility form the foundation of a recruiter's relationship

with his community and ultimately, the prospective Future Soldier. By successfully establishing trust and credibility, recruiters increase the likelihood that prospective Future Soldiers will rely on their recruiter for career guidance. Recruiters must be aware of the fact that ideas, plans, or goals communicated from their prospects are very personal; regardless of how the recruiter perceives them and they must respect the prospect's choices. By respecting every person, recruiters will create the communicative process that is vital to developmental counseling.

Self-aware leaders are less likely to project their own biases onto subordinates. (FM 22-100, app C.)

9. Self-awareness provides recruiters the ability to recognize their personal strengths and vulnerabilities. A self-aware recruiter understands the fact that every person is unique and may interpret his statements and actions completely different than he intended. During the Army interview recruiters will develop alternatives designed to assist their prospects to achieve their goals. Often, recruiters will encounter prospects that have not set goals. Self-aware recruiters possess a greater ability to empathize with the prospect, thus, creating a better understanding of how to proceed effectively through the Army interview. Recruiters can ill-afford to minimize the prospect's wants, needs, and desires. By seeming to trivialize the goals of the prospect and replacing them with their own, recruiters create barriers to open communication that will have a negative impact on the interpersonal relationship with the prospect. These "pitfalls" of communication will drastically affect all relationships. The self-aware recruiter who inadvertently enters into this pitfall will effectively recognize and remove this barrier. Without open dialogue, recruiters reduce their worth to nothing more than a talking-head salesman, who could be replaced by an electronic kiosk in a mall.

As a leader, you need to avoid misunderstandings that develop from cultural differences... You show respect when you seek to understand your people's background, see things from their perspective, and appreciate what is important to them. (FM 22-100, app C.)

10. Our society is one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world. Recruiters are at a distinct advantage when they have an understanding of the beliefs, values, and norms of the community and the individuals they interview. While recruiters strive to live the Army values, they must understand that the community they recruit from may have a different set of values. It is imperative that they actively seek to understand, not judge, the environment from which they recruit. This understanding will give recruiters the ability to appreciate what is important to the prospect they are counseling, making them more effective in their recruiting efforts. Whenever possible, recruiters should research their communities' and prospects' beliefs, values, and norms. This research can be accomplished through the chamber of commerce, local chapters of organizations, the Internet, and actively listening during contact with prospective Future Soldiers.

Cultural Awareness — SSG Turner

While shopping at the mall with his mother, Mario saw the Army recruiting station and told her he wanted to talk to a recruiter. The two of them stepped into the station to encounter SSG Turner, who had just been assigned to the area. SSG Turner greeted them, engaged them in conversation, and offered them a seat at his desk.

Mario's mother looked a little uncomfortable, but when she dismissed herself to continue shopping "while you two talk," SSG Turner did not think anything of it.

SSG Turner proceeded to conduct the Army interview with Mario. During the course of the interview, he discovered that Mario lived at home with his mother, was working part-time in the family business (which he was not too happy with) while going to the local university, and was interested in a career as an officer in the "military," following in his deceased father's footsteps. Mario stated that his mother was uncomfortable with the idea of him joining the Army because she remembered how his father had been treated as a minority in the military and did not want the same for her son. However, Mario thought that she would "come around."

The interview concluded with SSG Turner and Mario weighing the alternatives that were available—Mario emphatically agreed that the Officer Candidate School Program would fit his goals—and he agreed to start processing for the Officer Candidate School Program. A followup appointment was scheduled for the next day at 1000 to complete the packet and obtain the necessary documents from Mario.

By 1015, the following day, Mario had failed to show for his scheduled appointment with SSG Turner. SSG Turner called Mario to discover that he had changed his mind. While pursuing the reasoning behind the change of heart, SSG Turner discovered that Mario and his mother, along with her three brothers had discussed the merits of being an officer in the Army. As a family, they had concluded that it would be much better for Mario to graduate in the spring, and take over the family business that his father had established.

When SSG Turner completed his afteraction review with the station sommander, he left with the understanding that within Mario's community, family ties are very strong and it was important to include everyone when conducting an Army interview. If he had some insight into the cultural norms of the prospect's family—and understood the major influence that they had in the decisionmaking process—he may have been able to overcome the obstacles that surfaced away from the office.

Leaders achieve credibility by being honest and consistent in their statements and action. If you lack credibility with your subordinates, you will find it difficult to influence them. (FM 22-100, app C.)

11. Establish trust through word and action. Recruiters must be leaders of strong moral character and live the Army values. As ambassadors for the Army, recruiters must embody the Army values. The first and last lines of the Soldier's creed are "I am an American Soldier." Recruiters serve a public that expects them to be Soldiers—self-disciplined, professional, and socially upstanding. Recruiters cannot allow a negative stereotype of their profession to be confirmed. If recruiters live the Soldier's creed, they will create mutual trust with the community and their ability to achieve mission success will be greatly enhanced.

Trust, Credibility, and the Recruiting Environment — SFC House

SFC House has been recruiting in the same area for the past 4 years and is well established within the community. He has developed many centers of influence that have provided referrals regularly through the years. One of his centers of influence is Mr. Clayton who retired from the Marine Corps as a Gunnery Sergeant. Mr. Clayton called SFC House one afternoon to inform him that he knew a young man named Matthew, who would be a good candidate for enlistment. Mr. Clayton was of the opinion that Matthew would serve well to have some direction and discipline in his life. He stated that Matthew had graduated from high school a few years ago and had been bouncing from job to job. Lately, Matthew had been asking Mr.

Clayton about his time in the Corps. SFC House thanked Mr. Clayton, called Matthew, and set up an Army interview for the next day.

During the interview, Matthew was very excited about the opportunities that the Army had to offer and committed to enlist as soon as possible. During the process of ensuring Matthew was qualified for enlistment, SFC House sensed hesitation when questioning Matthew about his involvement with law enforcement officials. Although he denied any law infractions, Matthew's body language made SFC House suspicious.

SFC House ran the appropriate background checks and was pleased to discover that everything was clean. While walking to his vehicle in the parking lot, Officer Stan from the Sheriff's Department stopped SFC House to talk. During their brief conversation, Officer Stan asked SFC House if he was going to be able to help Matthew. "You know, people make mistakes. I think the Army would do a great job of setting Matthew on the right path." As the conversation continued, SFC House learned that Matthew was arrested for possession of a controlled substance only a week ago. The magistrate who heard the preliminary case told Matthew that his record would remain clean if he joined the service.

Before returning to the recruiting station, SFC House stopped by Matthew's home to inform him that he was not qualified to join the Army. He visited Mr. Clayton and thanked him for the referral. SFC House informed Mr. Clayton of the unfortunate turn of events and took the opportunity to speak, subtly, about the Army standards for enlistment. Finally, back at the office, he called the First Sergeant to explain that his applicant would not be enlisting at the end of the week.

SFC House's actions exemplify the professionalism and dedication to the Army that are required by all in USAREC. While it might have been easy for a recruiter to continue processing Matthew into the Army, justifying the action as "making mission," SFC House upheld his commitment to the Army values. Even if SFC House had succeeded in enlisting Matthew, he would have created the impression with everyone that knew about the case that the Army will "bend" its rules. This would certainly undermine his recruiting efforts and the efforts of those that come after him.

By understanding the subordinate's position, you can help a subordinate develop a plan of action that fits the subordinate's personality and needs, one that works for the subordinate. If you don't fully comprehend a situation from your subordinate's point of view, you have less credibility and influence and your subordinate is less likely to commit to the agreed upon plan of action. (FM 22-100, app C.)

12. Empathy is having the capacity for understanding and being sensitive to the experiences, feelings, and thoughts of the prospect to such an extent that recruiters can almost experience or feel them themselves. By "putting themselves in their prospect's shoes" recruiters have the ability to not only understand what their prospect's needs, wants, and desires may be but also an understanding of "why." It is a way to validate the other person's reality, perspective, and point of view. This insight plays an important part in the initial influencing of the recruiter's prospect and as reinforcement of their commitment to enlist while they are in the Future Soldier Program.

COUNSELING SKILLS

13. All leaders should continuously develop their leadership skills and counseling techniques. This is accomplished through active listening, studying human behavior, sharpening effective communication techniques, becoming self-aware, and developing valuable interpersonal skills. Each interview will vary, but the skills recruiters

use remain constant. The basic skill that must be mastered by everyone in USAREC is active listening.

14. Active listening is a set of listening skills and techniques which encourage people to communicate more openly and freely. When a person uses active listening, a message is conveyed both verbally and nonverbally that the person who is speaking is being heard and thoroughly understood. Active listening has many components including body language (nodding, eye contact, open posture, body and facial expressions) and verbal techniques (reflective listening, paraphrasing, asking clarifying questions, and understanding the message behind the message).

15. Body language interpretation can be difficult if the recruiter is unfamiliar with his audience. There are several universal examples that may apply in most cases: Arms crossed on chest can portray defensiveness or close mindedness; stroking chin could equate to a person trying to make a decision; hand to cheek could mean that the prospect is evaluating and thinking about what has been said; touching or slightly rubbing the nose can mean that there is doubt, rejection, or distrust about what has been said; leaning forward could show that the person the recruiter is speaking with is very interested in what is being said. Recruiters should be aware of subtle changes in their prospect's body position, eye contact, and hand gestures. For the same reason, recruiters should recognize the signals they are sending through their own body language. The practice and study of nonverbal communications are necessary in order for recruiters to be more effective in communicating their thoughts to their audience.

16. Reflective listening entails repeating back to prospects exactly what the recruiter heard them say, in their actual words. It will increase the recruiter's understanding of the prospect's intent; it can help the prospect to clarify his thoughts; and it can reassure the prospect that the recruiter is willing to attend to his point of view and wants to help.

17. Paraphrasing is repeating to the prospect what the recruiter heard him say by summarizing it and putting it into the recruiter's own words. When the prospect senses that the recruiter truly understands what he is saying, the recruiter's credibility is enhanced.

18. Clarifying questions are asked in an effort to gain a deeper and more accurate understanding for what is said. Clarifying questions lessen the possibility that the person speaking will be misunderstood, and his thoughts and feelings misconstrued. When a recruiter is able to "hear" the hidden message that lies beneath what is actually said, his effectiveness in providing meaningful counsel is greatly enhanced.

Active Listening — SSG Turner

SSG Turner has thoroughly prepared for his interview with Heather. He spent several days gathering blueprint information from one of his Future Soldiers and the faculty at her high school. Heather participated in Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps and sounded very excited about the interview. SSG Turner was very confident about this appointment. SSG Turner is a very effective speaker. Whenever there is silence during an interview, he easily fills the void with some type of discussion to get the interview back on track.

Heather's parents met SSG Turner at the door and were very involved during the interview. SSG Turner felt as though the interview was on track and thought he established effective communication with Heather and

her parents. During the interview, Heather stated that her ultimate goal was to earn a degree in Behavior Science. SSG Turner thoughtfully designed several alternatives for Heather, two of these alternatives included specialized Army programs and one was via the local University, to achieve her goal.

Several times throughout the interview, Heather discussed the fun she had in her Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps class. She also mentioned that she thought going to Airborne School would be exciting. Heather's parents remarked several times on her athletic ability and achievements throughout school. Several times during the interview, Heather would make eye contact with her parents as if she were concerned about something.

Upon presenting Heather's alternatives to achieve her goals, SSG Turner sought to gain a commitment. Heather remarked that she really liked the alternatives but wanted several days to discuss these alternatives with her parents. SSG Turner completed the interview and scheduled an appointment with the family 5 days later. Three days had past when Heather showed up unexpectedly at the recruiting station. She was very excited and stated that she joined the Marine Corps that day. SSG Turner was very surprised by this revelation and asked Heather why she had joined the Marine Corps. Heather stated that the Marine recruiter spent his time discussing all the challenges she would have being a Marine. SSG Turner reviewed the results of his interview with the station commander, SFC Johnson. SFC Johnson pointed out that Heather discussed her need for challenge indirectly throughout the interview and SSG Turner had missed this communication. SFC Johnson provided training on active listening to enhance SSG Turner's interview techniques. In this example, SSG Turner established a barrier to communication by not recognizing some of the verbal and nonverbal cues presented by Heather and her parents.

PITFALLS

19. Avoid the influence of:

- Personal bias – an unfair preference or opinion based on the recruiter's background and culture.
- Rash judgments – jumping to conclusions before discovering more information.
- Stereotyping – categorizing individuals or groups according to a preconceived image or idea.
- Loss of emotional control – getting angry and allowing personal distractions to influence the outcome of the interview.
- Inflexible methods of counseling – comfort with one way of counseling and using that method with all individuals.
- Improper followup – followup without an agreement is not a followup, it is another call.

COUNSELING PROCESS

20. The mission of the recruiter, and all those that support our ultimate recruiting system, is the enlistment and commission of qualified young men and women into the Army. The recruiter will encounter many people while conducting operations to make the mission and must be able to adapt the Army interview to the situation at hand. While the following model addresses the Army interview as it applies to a prospect, it should conform with all aspects of recruiting (i.e., centers of influence and very important persons cultivation, prospecting techniques, presentations, etc.).

21. The Army interview model presented in subsequent paragraphs will apply to all prospecting efforts. However, the objective of prospecting is different. The ultimate objective of prospecting is obtaining a commitment from a person (a lead) to meet with the recruiter and participate in an Army interview. During the Army inter-

view, recruiters counsel prospects and lead them to make a commitment to join the Army. The principles and concepts of this model remain the same in any situation and recruiters will increase their chances of successful prospecting by understanding and practicing the concepts of this model.

22. Recruiters spend many hours prospecting for individuals in pursuit of accomplishing their mission. It is important that they are effective in presenting the Army story once they have identified an individual who is interested in what the Army has to offer. The Army interview is the process by which each of our recruiters will demonstrate the value of joining the Army. While each interview will vary based upon the prospect's needs, wants, and desires, it is modeled after developmental counseling (as outlined in FM 22-100) that allows for flexibility but provides structure to the process.

NEED FOR THE ARMY INTERVIEW

23. When recruiters contact leads for the first time, it is vital that they establish and maintain trust and credibility with the individuals so that effective communication channels remain open. Maintaining trust and credibility can be described as gaining respect and acceptance, while putting someone at ease. In order to make the prospect feel comfortable, recruiters must show a genuine concern for, and interest in, the person.

24. Recruiters will engage in open dialogue that will assist them in gathering intelligence about the lead, create an interest in, and obtain a commitment to undergo an Army interview. Asking thought-provoking, open-ended, fact-finding questions (questions that cannot be answered with a "yes" or a "no") will allow the person to open up to the recruiter. This creates an environment that will give credence to the recruiter's concern for the well-being of the prospect and create a flow to the conversation. Most importantly, it will give the recruiter insight to the needs, wants, and desires of the person whom they will be counseling.

25. While attempting to obtain an appointment, and throughout the Army interview, recruiters will encounter obstacles from their prospects. These obstacles will vary greatly and may appear in the form of: Preference for another service, antimilitary beliefs, fear of the unknown, personal bias, insufficient time for the prospect, or many other obstacles. Recruiters must be prepared to address and overcome these obstacles. Using the problem solving techniques cited in FM 22-100, chapter 5, and the model provided in this manual, recruiters will improve their ability to overcome these obstacles and gain the commitment. The recruiter will obtain an appointment to conduct an Army interview once the recruiter discovers the lead's goals. This lead is then considered a "prospect" for the Army.

PREPARE FOR THE COUNSELING

26. The key to successful counseling is proper preparation. While a recruiter cannot always foresee the outcome of an Army interview, the following tips are measures recruiters can take to increase the probability of successfully gaining a commitment.

27. Develop a blueprint. Blueprinting is gathering information from outside sources, friends, parents, school officials, Future Soldier Program members, etc., and from the individual with whom the recruiter will be speaking. This information is reviewed before the counseling interview. Ultimately, the information is used to help establish and maintain trust and credibility, and assist to determine the prospect's needs and

interests and identify goals. This will allow the recruiter, as a leader, to help lead the prospect through the process of determining a plan of action.

28. Create a good appearance. The recruiter's uniform, appearance (to include his equipment and office), and professional conduct represent the Army as a whole. The recruiter is probably the first "Face of the Army" that prospects, their families, and their friends have met. The people whom the Army serves have high expectations of their Soldiers; recruiters must exceed those expectations. The office and Government-owned vehicle will be neat, clean, and present a professional appearance. First impressions are lasting impressions. Recruiters must ensure that the people with whom they meet form the best first impression possible. The people in the communities where the recruiters work and live will observe every behavior demonstrated by their Army recruiter.

29. Determine the best location. The Army interview can be conducted anywhere, but recruiters should ensure they choose a place that minimizes interruptions and is free from distracting sights and sounds. Consider the comfort zone of the prospect. Let them decide if the recruiting office, their own home, or another location will be best to conduct the interview. If the prospect is comfortable, he will be more apt to open up and talk freely and honestly with the recruiter. The ideal location is the prospect's living room or around the dining room table with his family present.

30. Select a suitable time. When scheduling the appointment, recruiters should allot enough time for a complete Army interview. A complete interview, without distractions will take more than 2 hours to conduct. In order to give the attention each prospect deserves, recruiters should not "overbook" their schedules. The prospect's time is just as valuable as the recruiter's. The recruiter should be on time for the appointment and use the time with the prospect's best interests in mind. Recruiters enter a "win-win" situation by discovering who will influence the prospect's decisionmaking process and include them in the interview (see blueprinting). If the prospect is married, if he or she is 17 and will need parental consent, or if the prospect is involved in a relationship or relies heavily on the advice from his friends, schedule the appointment when these influential people can be present. This approach will eliminate any obstacles, allowing the recruiter to gain a commitment without the prospect changing his mind later. In some situations, it will result in the identification of other leads.

31. Get organized. After reviewing blueprint information, organize the information that will assist in conducting a successful Army interview. Review all of the blueprint information on the prospect. Identify topics to explore during the Army interview. Recruiters should ask themselves questions such as: Did we make the appointment based on the Student Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery scores? Is the individual interested in airborne training? What are the prospect's goals? Then identify, gather, and organize the right information. Some of the material is located in the Army Recruiting Information Support System in the form of multimedia, Web sites, and other material that recruiters will use as evidence during the Army interview. Identify potential problems that may occur during the counseling session: A parent may have served in the Armed Forces and did not have a positive experience; a spouse or significant other may not want to endure a separation; and any obstacles revealed during the initial contact. Recruiters will develop a plan to revisit these facts to ensure they do not become obstacles.

32. Write it all down. Outline the counseling session components. By using the information obtained from the prospect and outside sources, the recruiter will create a foundation to work from during the Army interview. Recruiters must be able to think through and identify any potential problems that may surface and then address

courses of action (COAs) before encountering them face-to-face. Recruiters must be ready for anything and everything when preparing to conduct an interview. While it is vital the recruiter remain flexible once the interview begins, he must stay focused on the desired outcome, establish goals, and show prospects their pathway to success by joining the Army.

33. Plan your counseling strategy. While there are many approaches to counseling, FM 22-100 addresses three avenues of approach that can be effective: Directive, nondirective, and combined. Recruiters must be adept at interpreting the situation and the individual's personality when determining the use of each of these styles. Recruiters may start the Army interview in the nondirective approach, soliciting input from the prospect in order to uncover goals and aspirations. They then move into the combined approach to solidify plans of action and engender the commitment to enlist, then finish in the directive approach as processing is scheduled. Flexibility is paramount when mentoring and coaching a prospective Future Soldier.

34. Establish the right atmosphere. Recruiters should make the prospect feel as comfortable and relaxed as possible. If the interview will take place in the recruiting station, ensure that there is something to drink (bottled water, coffee, soda), ensure there will be enough seating for everyone, etc. The little things will go a long way.

CONDUCT COUNSELING - THE ARMY INTERVIEW

35. The Army interview is a nonlinear process. Recruiters rely upon their training, experience, intuition, and the fundamentals of effective counseling techniques to move through the Army interview. Recruiters adapt, adjust, and continue the mission of conducting the Army interview. They retrace earlier discussions or jump ahead as dictated by the situation and the prospect. Recruiters should not feel confined by a system and be aware of what is occurring during the counseling session to ensure that they are working in tandem with the prospect in an effort to establish goals and identify a plan of action to achieve those goals. Recruiters are the Army's best and brightest leaders. They are adaptive and self-aware, seeking ways to improve themselves through training and self-study. These leaders know the difference between transactional and transformational leadership and know when to apply each type in given situations.

TRANSACTIONAL VERSUS TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

"...today's networked, interdependent, culturally diverse organizations require transformational leadership to bring out...in followers...their creativity, imagination, and best efforts." (Cascio, Whither industrial and organizational psychology in a changing world of work? American Psychologist, 50, 928-939.)

36. Soldiers often combine transactional leadership with transformational leadership during their tenure as leaders in the Army. Leading someone to join the Army rests heavily on the recruiter's ability to use the transformational style of leadership. While transactional leadership relies upon the use of rewards and punishment, transformational leaders (recruiters) must "transform" their prospects, by challenging them to rise above their immediate needs and self-interests and develop a plan for individual growth.

37. It is the job of recruiters to use their charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration to lead their prospects through

a decisionmaking process. If applied correctly, the use of transformational leadership will elevate the recruiter's ability to have a positive influence on the prospect and will result in the prospect wanting to emulate the recruiter. Charisma is established through the recruiter's self-confidence and ability to assist the prospect to envision and set goals for themselves. Inspirational motivation provides prospects with challenges and reasons to achieve their goals by taking action. One way to inspire is for recruiters to help their prospects reflect on previous goals and motivate them to take action by bringing out their accomplishments. Intellectual stimulation helps the prospect to question assumptions he may have made about his future. This will help generate solutions to achieve his goals. Individualized consideration, the most important part of transformational leadership, treats each prospect as an individual and provides coaching, mentoring, and growth opportunities during a recruiter's relationship with each prospect.

OPENING – BUILDING TRUST AND CREDIBILITY AND TELLING THE ARMY STORY

38. Normally, the recruiter talked with the prospect either face-to-face or by telephone. Recruiters must be mindful of the initial trust and credibility that was established and continue to build upon it during the opening of the Army interview. In the event of a walk-in interview, building trust and credibility is still very important, just because someone walks through the door of the recruiting station does not mean that he is going to enlist. Most prospects will feel uneasy during their first interview. They will feel fear, doubt, intimidation, distrust, and anxiety for a myriad of reasons. Recruiters should assume these feelings exist and take deliberate action to put their prospects at ease and make them feel comfortable. The best approach to break the ice is to be honest and direct. It is all right for recruiters to say something such as, "I know you may feel apprehensive about this interview. I remember the first time I spoke with my recruiter and really did not know what I was doing or why I was even there. Do not worry, I am here to help you and that is all. If you have any questions about the information I am giving you, don't hesitate to ask them until you fully understand." A recruiter might even say, "I am not going to ask you to join the Army unless you want me to, is that fair?" As soon as the prospect agrees to something, the recruiter has formed a first contract and each one after that is easier. This example is only an example, the point being, it is up to the recruiter to set the tone and pace of each interview and to help the prospect know up front the Recruiter understands his fears and concerns. There is always initial anxiety when encountering the unknown. Recruiters need to assist in squelching the anxious feelings as quickly as possible to remove any psychological barriers to the Army interview and open a two-way communication channel.

STATE THE REASON FOR THE COUNSELING

39. To start the Army interview, the recruiter states the purpose of the meeting and establishes the role of the prospect during the interview. For example, a recruiter might say, "The reason why we're here is to help you develop a plan that will lead you to accomplish your goals. If you do not have any goals or you are undecided, we will work together to discover them. I will help you discover a variety of ways to achieve your goals." The prospect will understand that the recruiter is working for them. Recruiters will encounter prospects without set goals. When this occurs, recruiters will help prospects identify their goals through effective counseling.

40. Always qualify the prospect. Recruiting is a human resource function. Recruiters should approach the Army interview as if they are the Army's human resource representatives. Recruiters will ask general questions to establish control of the interview as they work to qualify the prospect. There are no standard questions and

recruiters may ask such things as, “Do you believe that you are qualified to be a Soldier?” “Do you have what it takes to succeed in the Army?” “What contributions will you make to the Army?” Recruiters should view the Army interview as if it were a job interview from any other employer (Government or private sector). Recruiters are responsible for determining if prospects are qualified to perform duties within the Army and meet the administrative and moral qualifications outlined in AR 601-210. Recruiters will learn to gather most of the required prequalification information during the body of the Army interview. As a general guideline, recruiters should determine the qualifications of a prospect before they start to develop a plan of action. This will ensure that qualified prospects receive the right options and information.

41. The Army interview begins with the recruiter telling an Army story. While each story is personal and individual-based, it is universal in its impact on the audience when told with honesty and conviction. This creates the opportunity for recruiters to present some of the details of their own experiences. By telling their Army story up front, the task of establishing credibility and trust becomes easier and recruiters will build self-confidence early in the counseling process. Confidence leads to enthusiasm and a recruiter’s enthusiasm is contagious. The personalized version of the Army story may include the recruiter’s initial enlistment experience and subsequent assignments. Discussing promotions, awards, campaigns, and assignment locations will begin the process of educating the prospect on a future in the Army. This personalized Army story should be well rehearsed and supported by some form of evidence in a personal “scrapbook.” Recruiters must avoid coming off as bragging about their experiences. A well-told personal Army story will assist recruiters establish their credibility.

TELL THE ARMY STORY

42. Recall that during the opening part of the Army interview, the recruiter told his personal Army story. The recruiter told the prospect why he joined the Army, his accomplishments, and adventures. It is at this point in the interview the recruiter shifts his focus and concentrates his efforts on the Army. When telling the Army story, recruiters open up the world of the Army to the prospective Future Soldier. This helps prospects see the Army through the eyes of the recruiter, showing them with word pictures some of the things they will do when they become An Army of One. Recruiters will use Army Recruiting Information Support System multimedia presentations on the recruiter workstation to help illustrate and bring to life the Army story they tell.

43. Asking the prospect what he or she knows about the Army will serve as a starting point from which to build the Army story. By understanding the prospect’s point of view, the recruiter also gains insight about the person being counseled. The recruiter will talk about the history of the Army, the Army values that he lives by, and the Soldier’s creed. The most important thing that the prospect should understand is that every Soldier in the Army, including the recruiter and, eventually the prospect is relevant to the Army, they are An Army of One.

GOAL SETTING

44. The next step in establishing the prospect’s plan is to identify the desired outcome. The recruiter’s goal is to gain a commitment from the prospect to join the Army; however, the recruiter cannot afford to lose sight of the fact he is there for the prospect, to outline how joining the Army will help the prospect achieve his personal goals and aspirations. Recruiters will take on the role of counselor, mentor, and

coach during the initial part of the Army interview, to lead the prospect through the mental process of identifying his needs, wants, and desires.

IDENTIFY OR ESTABLISH THE PROSPECT'S GOALS

45. In order to recognize what the prospect's goals and motives may be, the recruiter must actively listen and understand the prospect. The prospect may not have put a lot of thought into the goal-setting process prior to meeting the recruiter. In many cases, prospects may have a lengthy "laundry list" that they are trying to fulfill. Regardless of the situation, using skilled questioning and active listening, the recruiter will draw from the prospect as much information as he can in order to correctly identify the goals that can be met through an enlistment in the Army. Questions to help generate goal-oriented thoughts will include, "Where do you see yourself five years from now?" "Now that you are a senior in high school, what kind of plans have you made?" "What kind of career move are you looking for?" "How do you see the Army benefiting you in the future?" In order for recruiters to create an atmosphere of high expectations when presenting the unique benefits that the Army has to offer, they must be thorough when questioning their prospects. A prospect that responds he was thinking of attending the local community college because his friends are going to or it's what his parents expect him to do, has only given the recruiter a glimpse of his "world." Well thought out, follow-on questions are necessary to help uncover and get a complete understanding of the desires of the prospect. "What do you want to do, Lucas?" "What is important to you?" "What is your passion in life?" Recruiters must be conscious of the techniques that they use in uncovering the goals of the prospect. Recruiters should avoid the perception they have taken on the role of interrogator, but ensure that all facts are uncovered.

FACTS AND ASSUMPTIONS

46. A fact is a piece of information about circumstances that exist or events that have occurred. An assumption is a statement that is assumed to be true and from which a conclusion can be drawn.

47. It is vital to their mission that recruiters base their counsel and career guidance on facts and not make assumptions. Uncovering facts about a prospect will be a tedious and time-consuming process, and in order to be an effective counselor, the recruiter must not take shortcuts during this process.

48. Active listening and open, two-way communication is key to the Army interview. It is important for the recruiter's personal biases to take a backseat and for him or her to remain objective during the counseling session. Recruiters need to look beyond the face value of any statement and try to understand what the prospect is really saying and feeling. They must listen to what they say and observe how they say it. While recruiters should work with the facts presented to them, they should also form conclusions based on more than just the prospect's statements; they must ask follow-on questions to expand the prospect's statements and responses.

49. The recruiter might misunderstand the prospect and pursue a COA that will not meet the true goals of the prospect if he does not ask follow-on questions. The only way recruiters can effectively lead and guide the prospect is to identify the true passion of the prospect. For instance, if the prospect tells the recruiter that he wants to attend the local technical college, the recruiter may start to outline a plan that involves the Montgomery GI Bill. By asking additional questions, the recruiter may learn the prospect wants to open his own business. Armed with all of the information about the prospect's goals, aspirations, and true passion, recruiters can effec-

tively generate a plan consisting of options and alternatives for each prospect. By fully understanding the goals of the prospect the recruiter will be able to develop a road map with the prospect that includes the Army as a means to reach those goals. This road map must tap into the true passion of the prospect.

50. After recruiters have uncovered the goals and aspirations of their prospect, to include the details that drive the goals, they will present all the features and benefits the Army can provide the prospect. While providing these features and benefits, recruiters should continue questioning prospects about their qualifications for joining. These questions should be transparent to the prospect, but provide the recruiter with valuable insight about the prospect's qualifications for special programs and options. Recruiters must be the subject matter experts on all programs, options, and benefits of both the Regular Army and the Army Reserve. Recruiters will explain these options and benefits in detail and tailor them to meet the prospect's specific goals. By presenting all the features and benefits of the Army, recruiters will effectively remove many potential obstacles. Recruiters will cover the following areas when discussing Army opportunities:

- **Service to country:** Tradition, history, and Army values.
- **Occupational and career enhancement:** Practical work experience, marketable job skill, college education, and emerging technology.
- **Leadership and management development.**
- **Diversity:** Cultural (travel) and organizational.
- **Income:** Financial stability and security.
- **Excitement:** Challenge, adventure, and recreation.
- **Respect:** Pride of service, public opinion, and sense of self-worth.

QUALIFICATIONS

51. As any human resource professional, recruiters must determine whether prospects meet the prerequisites established by the Army. Recruiters classify this important step as "prequalification" of the prospect. Prequalification of the prospect should not be taken lightly. Should recruiters fail to uncover all essential information during the Army interview and their applicant is later found unqualified for an option or is unable to join the Army, recruiters may find themselves in a very difficult position and will lose credibility and trust. When recruiters provide a prospect the wrong alternative because the recruiter failed to determine proper eligibility requirements, the prospect may lose interest, and prospects and parents will learn to distrust the recruiter.

52. When determining the eligibility of a prospective Future Soldier, recruiters must accurately find out a variety of information about their prospect. The information includes: Age, prior service activity (to include Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, Sea Cadet, Civil Air Patrol, and other ancillary organizations outlined in AR 601-210), physical background, law violations, educational status, marital status, dependents, and Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery testing status.

GENERATE ALTERNATIVES

53. Every person's goals are different. As leaders, recruiters must assist in generating specific COAs tailored around the needs of the person whom they are counseling. Recruiters must tap into the passion of their prospect by communicating the alternatives as a life plan, not just a career plan. The recruiter must engage the prospect's emotional side; get the prospect enthusiastic, motivated, and involved. An Army occupation is multifaceted which, inherently, will make it easier for the re-

cruiter to present several comprehensive alternatives for the prospect. Recruiters need an indepth understanding of all potential alternatives. Each alternative the recruiter presents to the prospect must be received as viable and relevant. The intangible benefits (leadership skills, self-discipline, self-awareness, etc.) must be included when developing alternatives. While a person can receive a cash bonus or hands-on training that may take care of their short-term goals, the recruiter must effectively convey to the prospect the merits of loyalty, duty, respect, service, honor, integrity, and personal courage and how they will affect the prospect in his future endeavors. An Army enlistment may not be the only alternative that would best serve the goals of the prospect. The recruiter must be prepared to address alternatives that may fall outside of "their lane," such as college enrollment or referring to local job placement centers. The salient point is that the recruiter aggressively address the established goals of the individual.

ANALYZE AND COMPARE THE ALTERNATIVES

54. The prospect might feel overwhelmed when presented with all the eligible choices provided by the Army (and other alternatives). It is crucial the recruiter assist in dissecting and comparing and contrasting the plausible alternatives with the prospect. Laying these alternatives out for prospects will greatly enhance their decisionmaking process. Considering his needs, ask the prospect what he thinks would be the best plan of action and how he came to that conclusion. Once the alternatives are addressed, prospects have an understanding of how the Army will help them achieve their goals. Their next step of making a commitment to join the Army will be an easy progression.

MAKE A DECISION AND WORK THROUGH OBSTACLES

55. The learned leader will be able to point out alternatives that the prospect can take in order to travel his "path to success," but it is the experienced leader that will allow the final decision to reside with the person who will be affected the most, the prospect. The recruiter will suggest, recommend, and advise about each of the paths available. Then he must act by asking for a decision. The recruiter should not expect a decision to join the Army until he leads the prospect to that point by asking for a decision.

56. When recruiters engender a commitment, prospects may be reluctant to give them one. Certain obstacles may influence their answer. While obstacles may occur at any time throughout the interview, they tend to be more prevalent when a decision is requested. Regardless of when an obstacle occurs, it must be identified and handled immediately. Recruiters must first identify the root problem causing the prospect to balk at making a decision. The prospect may not state his true concerns for many reasons, including biases, personal values, and embarrassment. Recruiters must tactfully bring the root cause of the obstacle to the surface and resolve it. Obstacles usually appear in the form of a problem or difficult decision. FM 22-100 provides a methodical approach to problem solving (paras 5-17 to 5-23). Let's face it, the prospect is being faced to make a difficult decision. He does not have the leadership experience or training recruiters possess. Therefore, recruiters must lead prospects through the problem solving process. The recruiter must be empathetic to his prospect's dilemma. Prospects must trust their recruiter and understand they have their best interests in mind. Recruiters must let prospects know they understand the difficulty of the decision to be made. Once the recruiter has done this, he will be able to identify the prospect's problem (obstacle). The recruiter must be empathetic to the prospect's emotional concerns. In addition to empathy, obstacles may be as simple as not having certain facts or details to make the decision. Whether ad-

addressing emotional needs or material facts, recruiters should ensure they generate alternatives for the prospect through the same familiar problem solving techniques that are used during the Army decisionmaking process. Recruiters must then assist the prospect in comparing the alternatives and working through the obstacle, always keeping the prospect's goals in mind, then executing the decision that has been agreed upon. Recruiters increase the effectiveness of their interviews by learning how to determine true obstacles versus superficial ones, and then applying the Army decisionmaking process to handle and resolve the obstacles.

57. If the prospect decides not to join (or is found to be unqualified) the recruiter must remember not everyone will become An Army of One and should be supportive and respectful of the individual's choice. Regardless of the outcome, recruiters should strive to gain a commitment from the prospect. Should the prospect decide to choose an alternative other than the Army, the commitment may be as simple as allowing followup activities. Recruiters must recognize that leading an individual through the decisionmaking process will take time. Many prospects that choose an alternative other than the Army will return later because of this commitment. Not every Army interview will result in an immediate enlistment. With proper guidance and timely followup by the recruiter, the prospect's likelihood of enlisting will increase.

Presenting Alternatives and Establishing Long-Term Relationships — SSG Turner

Mike has spent the last 2 hours speaking with SSG Turner about his goal to be the first person in his family to graduate from college. His plan is to attend the local community college in the fall after graduating from high school to get his degree in general education. His long-term goals are to go into radio broadcasting. He is presently working at a radio station as an intern. He was initially interested in what the Army had to offer because a friend whom SSG Turner recruited had been home on leave and spoken to Mike about his experiences.

SSG Turner outlined many alternatives for Mike. Some of the alternatives that he expounded on were the merits of gaining vital job training and experience that targeted his long-term goals: The Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Program, the Army's Tuition Assistance Program, and the Montgomery GI Bill that would assist Mike in attaining his short-term goal of graduating college. SSG Turner addressed the Regular Army, Army Reserve, and attendance at the local community college as alternatives.

After looking at all the alternatives, Mike decided that he would stay in the area, apply for a paying position at the radio station, and continue into college in the fall. SSG Turner respected Mike's decision, and took his role as a counselor seriously. He gave Mike some guidance on preparing for a job interview and counseled Mike on the requirements for enrollment at the college. The following day SSG Turner called Ms. Dearing, Mike's high school counselor, to inform her of Mike's intentions to attend the local community college. SSG Turner continued to followup with Mike throughout the school year to ensure that he was on track with his plans.

Even though the Army was a viable alternative, Mike was unwilling to commit to an enlistment. It would have been easy for SSG Turner to walk away from the interview with the knowledge that he had accurately represented the Army and had professionally counseled Mike. By respecting not only the choice that Mike made, but also following through with the assistance that SSG Turner proclaimed in the beginning of the interview, credibility had been established, with Mike and his high school counselor, that would pay dividends in the long run. SSG Turner had effectively opened the door to developing Mike and Ms. Dearing as centers of influence; and in the event that Mike changed his plans he knew that SSG Turner would be the person he can turn to for counsel and mentorship. SSG Turner became well respected in the school and his reputation for being credible and trustworthy resulted in a dramatic increase in referrals.

EXECUTE THE DECISION

58. The recruiter will outline in writing the COA when the prospect has made a commitment to enlist. They will specifically identify, in writing, what will need to be accomplished and when in order for the applicant to become part of the Future Soldier Program. The recruiter will address each part of the plan in writing so that there are no questions in the applicant's mind as to the professionalism and devotion that the recruiter has for him.

59. Issues to discuss should include the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, the electronic application, the physical examination at the Military Entrance Processing Station, contract process, and the Future Soldier Training Program.

FOLLOWUP

60. When the prospect makes a commitment to join the Army the leadership and counseling process does not end. It continues through the implementation of the plan of action. A recruiter's commitment to this new Soldier continues through his Army career. Their inherent obligation to "take care of Soldiers" provides the Army with a more dedicated and determined Soldier. These Soldiers will remember their relationship with their recruiter. Whether positive or negative, this memory will become the testimony to the recruiter's leadership.

SUMMARY

61. This manual has discussed telling the Army story, the Army interview, and developmental counseling as it applies to recruiting. The counseling provided in the field is prospect-centered, goal-oriented communication that outlines COAs in order for those seeking to become part of a values-based organization a clear "pathway to success."

62. The interview script below attempts to outline the use of the concepts presented in this manual. It is not all-inclusive and was only developed to provide a better understanding of the Army interview model.

Army Interview Model

Sergeant Dawson is one of the best recruiters in his recruiting company. He is considered one of the most dedicated and loyal Soldiers in his unit. He wakes up every day at 0500 and does physical training on his own. He arrives at work by 0800 every day unless he has other commitments for the day. Sergeant Dawson is a detailed recruiter; his military occupational specialty (MOS) is infantry. He participated in Operation Enduring Freedom. During his tour, Sergeant Dawson received the Bronze Star for actions under fire. Outnumbered and pinned down by enemy fire, his squad had broken contact with the rest of the platoon. One of the team had been mortally wounded and another wounded in the leg but continued to provide suppressive fire. Sergeant Dawson's squad worked together like a well-oiled machine. In spite of running out of ammunition, Sergeant Dawson relied upon his Soldiers to use their initiative, discipline, determination, and will to win and emerge from this hostile action. Sergeant Dawson had only one option, unite his team or be defeated. Taking advantage of the existing chaos, his squad maneuvered around the hostile action and linked back with his platoon. Their ordeal lasted for 14 hours. His squad worked together and evacuated their wounded man. During the entire battle, Sergeant Dawson's squad carried their fallen comrade. They refused to leave him behind. This experience had a lasting impact on Sergeant Dawson and inspired him to dedicate his career to his fallen friend.

Sergeant Dawson had worked as a recruiter for about a year. He had great difficulty making the transition at first. He was accustomed to planning in an environment in which he had control of many variables. He noticed, early on in recruiting, his span of control was extremely limited. Although he was a methodical planner, unforeseen obstacles often rendered his plan ineffective. Sergeant Dawson was frustrated much of his first year in recruiting. His turning point came when he realized that many of the personal qualities that enabled him to succeed on the battlefield applied to his recruiting efforts. This revelation occurred after working with his team for many hours a day toward accomplishing their recruiting goals. They had to dedicate themselves and place the mission first over their personal comfort. Just as in combat, he would not accept defeat or allow his fellow recruiters to accept defeat. Accepting defeat meant that the Soldiers at war (his comrades) would suffer. "Failure is not an option" became his RS's motto.

Sergeant Dawson always develops a thorough list of leads from which to prospect. He rarely calls leads at random because he realizes the importance of doing research to discover as much information about his leads and the best time to prospect for those leads. Although this takes more time, his results are impressive. He considers this process similar to the intelligence he developed on the battlefield when he was in an Infantry unit. On this particular day, Sergeant Dawson conducted telephone prospecting for about an hour without obtaining a commitment for an interview. In fact, Sergeant Dawson has not contacted anyone from his precall plan today. He is not frustrated because he knows his efforts will pay off soon, they always do.

Finally, after many calls, Nikki answers his call:

"Hello is Nikki home?" Sergeant Dawson asked.

"Yes, this is she." Nikki responded politely.

"Nikki, I am Sergeant Dawson with the United States Army. Do you have a few minutes to answer a couple of important questions for me?"

"Sure" she replied.

"Nikki, I have not had a chance to speak with you at school or otherwise this year. I understand that you are in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) and I am sure you are starting to make plans for yourself after graduation. Have you thought about how the Army can help you with your future?"

"Well, to be honest, I haven't really thought about it, but my friend Mark joined the Marines last year. He tells everyone that it was the best decision he ever made." Nikki replied with some enthusiasm.

Sensing her excitement, Sergeant Dawson smiled and picked up the pace of the conversation slightly.

"Nikki, that makes my day to hear you say that – thank you! Many of the Soldiers I work with feel the same way." He paused, waiting for a response. When there was none, he went on: "Nikki, one of my duties as the Army representative for our community is to talk with people such as you about the development of their goals. I would like the opportunity to talk with you more about your goals. Have you thought about where you would like to be in about five or ten years from now?"

Nikki responded, "I have thought about it a lot lately. I am not sure exactly what I want to do, but would really like to do something that involves helping people. I definitely know I want to go to college next year." Sergeant Dawson wrote down *helping people and college* and said, "Nikki, I think that is commendable. Have you decided on the school?"

Nikki responded, "No, not really. I have several choices. I'm just not sure which one or what I'll major in." Sergeant Dawson stated, "I believe I may be able to help you with your decision. I would like an opportunity to provide you with some alternatives that would allow you to help people and attend school. Would Wednesday or Thursday be best for you?" Sergeant Dawson stopped talking and did not say another word, even during an uncomfortable five-second pause. He knew the next word must come from her.

"I think Thursday would work best" Nikki replied. "I've been working with Ms. Koplan, the school guidance counselor and she has helped me a lot."

"That's great, Nikki." Sergeant Dawson said as he wrote down *Ms. Koplan – helping Nikki*. "How is she helping you?"

"She is putting me in touch with some colleges." She replied.

"Have you applied to any of these schools?"

"No, not yet."

"Don't worry Nikki. You are well ahead of many of your peers and I want to commend you for your maturity by talking to Ms. Koplan. I will bring some information with me on Thursday that you may find helpful. Is 6 p.m. good for you?"

"Yes." She said in a more upbeat tone. "I think so. My parents usually get home around 7:00."

"In that case Nikki, I would prefer to meet with you then so that they can be there. Are they home now, Nikki?"

"Yes they are."

"Would you mind if I spoke with them." Sergeant Dawson asked.

"Well, my mom is outside, but my dad is here." She moved the receiver from her mouth and Sergeant Dawson heard the muffled words, "Dad, the Army recruiter is on the phone and would like to talk to you." Mr. Boggs answered the phone and said, "This is Fred Boggs, can I help you?"

"Sir, I am Sergeant Dawson, your Army representative. Nikki and I were discussing an appointment for us to meet and review her future plans. I would really appreciate it if we could schedule a time that was best for you and your wife to attend as well. Is Thursday at 7 p.m. good for you?"

There was a slight pause before Mr. Boggs asked, "Sergeant Dawson, what is this appointment for?"

"Sir, as your Army representative I have helped quite a few members of our community achieve their goals. I would like to help Nikki as well. I feel it is important that you and your wife attend the interview. This will allow me to answer questions and address any concerns that you or your wife may have."

"Okay Sergeant Dawson. That sounds good. We will be here on Thursday at 7:00." Mr. Boggs agreed to the time and put Nikki back on the phone. Sergeant Dawson confirmed the appointment and asked Nikki whether anyone she knew would like to attend. Nikki informed Sergeant Dawson that she would like her boyfriend to be present. Sergeant Dawson agreed and asked Nikki for his name and phone number and asked a few more blueprinting questions about her boyfriend, Bill. Sergeant Dawson discussed Bill's future plans with Nikki. Nikki informed him that he was not sure of his plans. Finally, Sergeant Dawson asked Nikki if she knew anyone else who might be interested in meeting with him to review their plans and discuss opportunities. She knew of no one else.

The next day, Sergeant Dawson described his call to SFC VanPelt, his recruiting station commander, during his afteraction review. Sergeant Dawson discussed Nikki's interests and asked SFC VanPelt for advice. SFC VanPelt recommended that Sergeant Dawson blueprint as much as possible prior to the appointment. He directed Sergeant Dawson to contact Ms. Koplan and ask for her input. SFC VanPelt informed Sergeant Dawson to anticipate any possible obstacles from Nikki, her parents, and her boyfriend. Sergeant Dawson left the afteraction review and began planning his visit to Nikki's school. He called the school and asked Ms. Koplan if she had a few minutes this afternoon for him. She did, and Sergeant Dawson told her he would be there around 2 p.m.

Sergeant Dawson went home and changed into his dress blues, had lunch, and spent, an hour or so with his wife and children before driving to the high school. Upon arrival at the school, Sergeant Dawson signed in at the registrar's office. Whenever possible, Sergeant Dawson made it a point to wear his dress blue uniform during school visits. The secretary remarked about his uniform and Sergeant Dawson thanked her. He went to the guidance counselor's office. Ms. Koplan was there and was happy to see Sergeant Dawson. He informed her that Nikki had an appointment with him this evening. Ms. Koplan informed Sergeant Dawson that Nikki was a good student and she thought she would do well in college. Sergeant Dawson inquired about the different schools Nikki was interested in and asked Ms. Koplan whether she could provide him with any information she thought he should know to help her plan her future. She told Sergeant Dawson that Nikki ran track and played on the varsity basketball team. She lettered as a freshman. Sergeant Dawson also gathered some more information about Nikki's boyfriend, Bill. It was not hard to engage Ms. Koplan in casual conversation and collect all the information he needed to develop a good blueprint for both Nikki and Bill. The meeting concluded with Sergeant Dawson offering his assistance to Ms. Koplan at her upcoming Career Day. Ms. Koplan was very happy to have Sergeant Dawson provide Color Guard activities and to set up a table to display information for her students. Sergeant Dawson and Ms. Koplan reviewed the long-range calendar and made tentative plans to have the Army Cinema Van visit the high school during Senior Appreciation Week. Sergeant Dawson

knew the Cinema Van would be in the recruiting battalion area during that time and made a note to call the recruiting battalion S-3 as soon as he left the school.

Once the meeting was over, Sergeant Dawson visited the other counselors and teachers and engaged them in casual conversation. He ensured his recruiting publicity item rack was replenished and sat with a few students who were waiting for basketball practice to start. While he chatted with them, Sergeant Dawson obtained the names, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and instant messenger identification of three new leads. He talked with the students about some of his experiences in the Army. The students were very interested in his tour overseas and participation in Operation Enduring Freedom.

The next day was Thursday and Sergeant Dawson prepared for his interview with Nikki. He invited SFC VanPelt to attend, but unfortunately he had other plans. Sergeant Dawson retrieved an application and enrollment information on the two colleges that interested Nikki. Ms. Koplan had explained that Nikki was considering a technical school and the local community college. Ms. Koplan also explained that Nikki was interested in nursing. Sergeant Dawson donned his dress uniform and proceeded to his appointment.

Upon his arrival, Sergeant Dawson shook hands with everyone and introduced himself. Upon meeting Nikki's boyfriend Bill, Sergeant Dawson remarked, "I don't think I have met you before, Bill. Are you in school with Nikki?" Bill informed Sergeant Dawson that he graduated last year and he was working at a restaurant while attending school. The Boggs family was very receptive and offered Sergeant Dawson something to eat. Sergeant Dawson always accepts these types of offers. He believes they showed his host good manners and it always seemed to make them feel more comfortable. He complimented the Boggs on their home. Mr. Boggs stated, "I didn't know the Army had that uniform."

Sergeant Dawson explained, "Yes sir. They have had it for quite a while. Actually, the design originates from the old cavalry days. Notice how the jacket is darker than the pants? That's because the jackets weren't worn as often as the pants and so the pants faded during long hours on horseback in the sun." Mr. Boggs seemed very interested and stated that he had no idea.

"Well sir, that's just one story. The Army is deep in tradition. In fact, it is the oldest branch of the military. Protocol is important as well. Did you know that military protocol dictates the Army is first in order during ceremonies with other services? This is directly attributed to the proud and honorable lineage of our Army." Sergeant Dawson noticed Mr. Boggs leaning forward, this was a signal that he was very interested.

"I realize all of you have many questions for me. I am sure I'll get a chance to answer them during this interview. Nikki, I would bet you are a little nervous. I want you to understand that I am here for you. I can imagine the thoughts running through each of your minds. Before we begin, I would like to tell you a little about myself, my experiences in the Army, and how the Army is helping me achieve my goals. I was very nervous and uncomfortable when I had my first interview with my recruiter as well Nikki. I can remember that experience like it was yesterday. I was apprehensive because of some of the rumors you hear about recruiters. Nikki, have you heard any such rumors?"

Nikki chuckled and responded "Yes, I have heard some. Most people tell me not to trust a recruiter because they will tell you anything to get you to sign up. Another person told me about their cousin or someone who joined and didn't get what they were promised."

Sergeant Dawson smiled and said with enthusiasm, "Some things never change. Those were the same rumors I heard 10 years ago. Mr. and Mrs. Boggs, I welcome all your questions. If something I present to you tonight sounds too good to be true, check me on it. Everything I present tonight is the truth and is supported in writing. Is that fair?" He asked, wanting to start getting the family saying "Yes" early on.

"Yes." They responded, in a somewhat unison fashion.

"Okay, let me get back to my story. I got to know my recruiter very well. He was hard working and always on time. I noticed that he did what he said he would do. He answered all of my questions, and I had many, and he helped me through the entire decisionmaking process that I went through. Even after I enlisted and left home, he kept in touch with me and my parents throughout basic training. I joined the Army for many reasons. I knew I needed college and I really wanted something exciting. I'm not someone that can sit still for long. I really didn't know what I wanted to learn in school. The Army fit my needs much better than the other services. I enlisted for the infantry. Are you familiar with that job, Nikki?"

"Yes, they are the ones that run around in the mud, aren't they?" She asked, looking at her dad. Sergeant Dawson laughed and said "Hooah" in a loud tone, pleasantly startling everyone in the room, including Nikki's boyfriend, Bill. Mr. Boggs laughed as Sergeant Dawson continued, "I spent plenty of time in the mud, but that's not all. I also spent time in the classroom. I have learned so much while serving as a Soldier, an infantryman. The Army taught me a great deal about leadership, about team building, the meaning of friendship and camaraderie, and so much more. The training is amazing. I did more than I ever thought I could do. I have used many of the skills in my daily life like first aid and map reading. My first duty assignment was Fort Benning, Georgia. I got to choose my assignment from a list of places when I enlisted, and you could too, Nikki. One of my favorite things about the Army is the challenge, both mentally and physically. I am never bored and I do something different every day." Sergeant Dawson paused and looked around the table, waiting for questions. When there were none, he went on, "I spent a tour in Iraq and participated in Operation Enduring Freedom. It was during this war that I lost one of my best friends in combat. He died doing what he loved to do, serving his country and protecting his men and fellow Soldiers. I will never forget this man. His courage has a lasting impact on me and I made a promise to myself that I will never let him down." Sergeant Dawson paused, swallowed, and went on.

"When I joined the Army I had my high school diploma. The Army gave me the opportunity and paid for my college education through eArmyU, a program I will tell you about later. I attended college when I could and earned my associates degree. I have continued my education online and on campus, and I am only four classes from earning my bachelor of science degree. This was done at no cost to me. Sure, I have to do a lot of it via the Internet but it fits my schedule very well. Nikki, I do represent the world's largest employer. In fact, you could think of me as the Army's human resource representative similar to corporate human resource representatives. They conduct the hiring and determine the qualifications of future employees to ensure the organization has the right person for the right job. Nikki, how do you see yourself making a positive contribution to the US Army?" Sergeant Dawson noticed a slight hesitation from Nikki. It was obvious she had not considered this question before.

Before Nikki could respond her father stated, "Nikki is a very bright person. She is a hard worker and takes pride in finishing what she starts. I think she will be good at whatever she puts her mind to do." Sergeant Dawson responded, "Sir, I believe she will as well. I have spoken to Nikki's guidance counselor and some of her friends at school. They have all made similar comments. So what do you think, Nikki? Where do you see yourself in 5 years?" Nikki thought for a minute. "I really want to go to college, so I guess 5 years from now I would say that I would want to have graduated college and be working." Needing more information Sergeant Dawson continued, "Okay, Nikki, looking at the college aspect first, what do you want to major in?" Nikki replied that she wasn't sure yet, but was considering something in the medical field. "What is it about the medical field that interests you?" asked Sergeant Dawson. Nikki stated that she really enjoyed helping people. She mentioned that she often pictured herself working in the medical field or something similar that would allow her to assist people. She further described that she thought it would be challenging. Sergeant Dawson paused for a moment then asked, "What kind of plans have you made for pursuing your college education?"

At this point Mr. Boggs spoke up, "Nikki's mother and I have always wanted her to go to college, so we have put money aside for her education and will support her through college." Nikki added that she was looking at the local vocational school so the expenses wouldn't be that much, especially if she lived at home. Sergeant Dawson complimented them all on their foresight, made note of the initial planning that had been accomplished, then continued. "Nikki, would it be safe to assume that whatever you decided to major in—be it to become an RN, LPN, or even pursue a PhD—that you're overreaching goal is to have a challenging career that allows you to help people?" She replied immediately, "Yes." Sergeant Dawson pressed further, "If you didn't have to have a college degree to achieve this goal would you pursue that path?" At this question Nikki balked and her parents noticeably tensed. Her boyfriend, on the other hand, leaned into the conversation.

Nikki replied, "Well, college is very important and I really don't see how I could *not* go to college to achieve

my goals. Besides, I wouldn't want to let my parents down by not going to college." Sergeant Dawson smiled and thanked Nikki for her candor. "Please, don't think that I would ask you to give up the pursuit of your dreams—that is not what I am here to do. Actually, it appears as if you have accomplished quite a bit in planning for your future and I must commend all of you. So many times I speak with young people such as yourself and they are just beginning to realize that they haven't put very much thought into the future. As a counselor it's refreshing to speak with someone that has set some goals and started planning. In fact, because of your ability to convey your true goals it makes it much easier for me to assist you."

Sergeant Dawson thanked Nikki for sharing this information with him and explained his role as a counselor. He stated that he has some alternatives for her but would like to present some of the benefits the Army had to offer. He stated that he would show these alternatives a little later. At this time, Sergeant Dawson retrieved a binder from his briefcase. He opened the binder and began showing the family an Associated Press article about a lawyer, Michael Brown, who traded his salary for basic training. Sergeant Dawson explained, "I wanted to show you this article for a reason. Many people are joining the Army today because they feel they have a greater calling than a nine to five job, they want to be part of something bigger. In the case of Private Brown, similar to your wanting to help people Nikki, he wanted to serve his country. Many people have never realized the history associated with the Army. As I mentioned earlier, we are the oldest and largest branch of the military. In addition to the history of the Army, we have long held a system of values. We use the acronym LDRSHIP to define these values. LDRSHIP stands for Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Before I entered the Army, I really did not pay as much attention to the importance of defined values. The Army helped me realize their importance and add to them. Maintaining these values has helped me become more successful and provided me the direction I needed to accomplish any goal." While Sergeant Dawson discussed some history about the Army, Mr. Boggs commented several times about some of his relatives who served in the Army and their experiences. Sergeant Dawson was very attentive while Mr. Boggs spoke. He would ask questions relating to each of the relatives. It was obvious that Mr. Boggs was proud of his family members who served in the military.

Sergeant Dawson made a smooth transition from discussing the Army's story to providing Nikki with information about how the Army is a terrific place to establish a starting point for her future. He explained the military occupational specialty (MOS) selection process and provided Nikki with an indepth briefing on the Army's education benefits and entitlements. During this discussion, Sergeant Dawson asked Nikki whether she had ever taken the Student Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery or any college entrance examinations. She informed him that she scored 1220 on the Scholastic Assessment Test. He was very impressed and congratulated her. He discussed the testing requirements for the Army with Nikki. Sergeant Dawson said, "Well, you should do well on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. The Army has developed some additional incentives. One of which is the Army College Fund." Nikki was somewhat familiar with the Army College Fund (ACF) and expressed interest in it. Sergeant Dawson explained the requirements of the program and educated her to the fact that the ACF was associated with "Critical Skills." While explaining critical skills, Sergeant Dawson showed the current priority MOS list to everyone. He did not review this list in detail and only showed it to illustrate his point. Mr. Boggs paid very close attention to this discussion and remarked that he had not heard about the ACF.

Sergeant Dawson emphasized the fact that civilian employers value the leaders provided by the Army. He stated, "Rarely will you find any civilian corporation that provides leadership training. If you do, it usually takes the form of periodic 2- or 3-day seminars. The Army is leadership driven. As such, we develop future leaders in a structured way. In fact, our promotion system rests heavily on leadership. We look for innovative leaders who are not afraid of taking calculated risks to the benefit of their personnel and our organization. When you couple the leadership training with the management experiences you will acquire in the Army, no wonder why we are the service of choice for corporate America." This statement appeared to catch Nikki's attention. Sergeant Dawson noticed the excitement in her eyes and the way she leaned forward while he displayed some photographs of his promotion ceremonies and Army

experiences. Sergeant Dawson continued, "I understand that you are enrolled in the JROTC, have you held leadership roles in the JROTC, school, or elsewhere Nikki?" She informed him that she was the first sergeant in her JROTC program; this was Nikki's third year. Sergeant Dawson commended Nikki and informed her that the Army would take advantage of her training by promoting her prior to entering active duty.

"You want to know one of my favorite things about the Army?" Sergeant Dawson asked.

Nikki replied, "Yes."

"The people I have had the pleasure meeting and working with. I enjoy the way Soldiers work together toward a common goal. I have had so many opportunities to travel in the last 10 years. I have visited Germany, Spain, Korea, Turkey, Iraq, and many other places. Traveling really opened my eyes to the world. At first, I felt uneasy but after a while, I began to thrive on learning new cultures. I honestly really believe this has made me a more rounded person."

Nikki interrupted by saying, "I love traveling and have always wanted to go to England." Sergeant Dawson decided to check the status of Nikki's attitude about joining the Army by asking, "If you could be stationed in Europe and travel to England, would you join the Army?"

Nikki looked at her dad and then her mom and said, almost embarrassed, "Well, I don't know, there would have to be more than just that in order to join, I guess."

"That's understandable Nikki." Sergeant Dawson said. "I wasn't trying to pressure you into making a decision, I was just checking to see how important going to England was to you. I will ask you these types of questions from time to time so that I can understand what you are thinking about. Is that okay with you?"

"Sure." Nikki said, a little more upbeat than before.

Sergeant Dawson moved on and emphasized some of the challenging aspects of the Army. He showed the airborne video using his laptop computer. Sergeant Dawson felt the videos gave strong support for the information he provided to prospects. Nikki commented that something like airborne training is exactly what she wanted to do. Sergeant Dawson took note of her remark and turned the page in his book to "Pay and Entitlements."

Sergeant Dawson began discussing the pay and entitlements offered by the Army. He informed her that she would enter the Army as a private first class and discussed the advantages of doing so. Nikki leaned forward on the edge of her chair and her eyes opened wide in an obvious display of satisfaction. Sergeant Dawson also noticed Bill leaning forward trying to hear and see more. Sergeant Dawson described the medical, dental, and travel benefits in detail.

As Sergeant Dawson completed providing Nikki with the pay and entitlements, he began discussing how the public respects Soldiers today similar to the World War II veterans. "There is no better feeling than to walk through the store and someone you don't know, walks up to you and thanks you for your service to the country. You can be extremely proud of your accomplishments and that you have served in the Army. Another plus is that employers have realized the values the Army instills and are eager to hire you over your civilian counterparts with similar educational backgrounds."

Sergeant Dawson answered a few questions about pay, medical benefits, and service to country and then went on, "As I mentioned earlier, Nikki, I am here to assist you in accomplishing your goals. Before we review your options and some other alternatives for achieving your goals, are there any questions you have in regards to the information we have covered?"

Nikki shook her head and replied, "No."

"How about anyone else? Questions?" Sergeant Dawson looked around the table. There were no other questions and he continued, "As I mentioned earlier, some of the Army's options require you to meet certain criteria. I need to ask you some questions about your background. Some of these questions are personal in nature and are protected by the Privacy Act. The information you provide will remain with me." Sergeant Dawson provided Nikki with a copy of the Privacy Act and began determining her qualifications. He completed his questioning and transitioned into discussing some of Nikki's alternatives.

"One alternative available to you is to gain admission in one of the local colleges. I know that your parents have put some money aside for your education, but there are also many financial aid packages available today. I took the liberty of obtaining information on some of these packages that are offered at the two schools you were looking into. Ms. Koplan provided me the information. She has a great deal of respect for you, Nikki. Once you graduate, you will be able to pursue employment that suits your goal of helping others.

A second alternative would be joining the Army Reserve. The Army Reserve offers the Selective Reserve GI Bill to assist you in pursuing your degree, give you the challenge that you seek while attending basic combat training (BCT), as well as afford you the opportunity to assist others through service to your country.

The third alternative is a little bit more intricate, and understand we are going to look at all of these alternatives in greater detail, and also involves an Army enlistment. You must understand that because the opportunities afforded someone joining the Regular Army are further reaching, there are many more approaches that you can take. I do believe that the guaranteed enlistment option coupled with the Montgomery GI Bill would be the best course with this alternative. This route will give you the opportunity to pursue a career in the medical field right away, giving you the opportunity to engage a challenging career and help people at the same time, *and* give you additional monies to pursue a degree.

It is important for you to understand that regardless of which Army alternative you choose, you may be required to deploy. For many people this is a frightening thought. In addition, I am sure Mr. and Mrs. Boggs, this reality deeply concerns you as well. This is a fact of the military today and there is nothing I, nor anyone else can do to assure you that your daughter would not deploy to a foreign land. However, I can assure you that before she left she would be a member of the best-trained and capable Army in the world. She herself would be fully trained and capable of fulfilling her role in the job she selected."

Sergeant Dawson pulled out a *Pathway To Success* planner that he liked to use during his interviews. It was something the kids carry with them these days. He used the notes section to map out his prospects' options, develop time lines, and leave them with something physical to use in making their decision. He knows that the Millennial Generation (his target market) are planners and seem to connect with him after a plan is developed. "Nikki, each of these alternatives will provide you a means of achieving your goals, but let us look at them a little more closely. If you choose to attend one of the local colleges full time, you will achieve your associates degree in 2 years." Sergeant Dawson drew a line representing the full-time college path.

"At this point, you will need to make a decision as to whether you will pursue a higher degree or seek employment. Your parents have already stated that they will take care of your college and living expenses, but I am sure they would not have an aversion to you seeking out scholarships or additional financial aid. With degree in hand I can see you succeeding at whatever you put your mind to." Nikki smiled when Sergeant Dawson encouraged her success.

Sergeant Dawson paused, made eye contact with everyone at the table, and waited for feedback. When none was offered he continued, "With the Army Reserve enlistment you would start your challenging career off right away." Sergeant Dawson stopped and showed everyone the BCT video from the Army Recruiting Resource Catalog on his computer. After the video played, he drew a time line on the same page as the full-time college time line and made reference points to milestones such as BCT and advanced individual training. He then went on to say, "Once you have completed BCT and your advanced individual training you will return home to pursue your college degree. You will go to drills at your unit once a month on a weekend and then 2 weeks during the summer your unit will conduct training exercises." Sergeant Dawson thoroughly explained the Army Reserve programs and ensured Nikki understood the type of units in the area, as well as the jobs available in those units.

"The extra benefit here is, once you have completed your job training, you will be eligible to receive the Selective Reserve GI Bill to assist in paying for your college. Mom's and dad's money will go further if you decide to stay in college longer. Now you're helping those you love while learning how to help those you don't know." Sergeant Dawson again paused, answered questions, and continued, "Finally, with an enlistment in the Army you can take advantage of the guaranteed training option, the Montgomery GI Bill, and gain valuable experience while pursuing your goals." Sergeant Dawson drew a third time line and explained in detail the guaranteed training enlistment option, the Montgomery GI Bill, tuition assistance program, and eArmyU. He expounded upon leadership and managerial experience, the challenges that would be offered during an Army enlistment, showing her the Army's video about Europe, and touched on the emotional topics that were important to Nikki. He showed her some of his own personal photos that he took while assigned on humanitarian missions in Bosnia, pictures of happy children that he took while members of his unit passed out candy. There were pictures of him skiing in Germany, and one of him and his friends standing in front of the Eiffel Tower. "Nikki, it goes without saying, you are a very intelligent person. Your parents, teachers, and peers all know that you are a caring person, and you have stated that you want to take a path that will allow you to show people how much you care by helping them, what better way of challenging yourself, and pursuing your passions than enlisting into the United States Army?"

"Nikki, which one of these alternatives do you see benefiting you the most?"

Nikki replied, "Well, it seems to me that the Army has most of what I am looking for. However, the thought of deploying to war really does scare me."

Sergeant Dawson explained, "Yes Nikki, it scared me as well. As I said earlier, that is a possibility in every branch of the military. You have a strong reputation around school and your community as someone who accomplishes what she sets out to do. You will be able to rely on this trait and we will provide you additional training and surround you with the most competent people in America should this event happen. You will, as I did, rely on the Army values and warrior ethos to get you through. Most of the men and women I served with would go back without question, if required. You are extremely talented and capable and I believe you will do very well in the Army. As your first supervisor, I will do everything I can to prepare you for your enlistment."

Sergeant Dawson continued, "Our Future Soldier Training Program is designed to provide you with the knowledge and skill to prepare you for training. You will meet many people like yourself and begin to develop that camaraderie I discussed earlier. We meet a minimum of once a month and I lead training sessions. Mr. And Mrs. Boggs, I will be available to come to your house at any time to answer any concerns you have."

"Nikki, are you ready to commit to the United States Army and have the Army commit to you?" stated Sergeant Dawson. At this time, Sergeant Dawson noticed that Mr. Boggs began to fidget with his fingers as he crossed his arms. It appeared as though Mr. Boggs became very uncomfortable. Mrs. Boggs remarked for the first time all evening, "Sergeant Dawson, I would really like the opportunity to talk about this as a family, is that possible?"

Sergeant Dawson responded immediately by saying, "Absolutely yes, Mrs. Boggs. I fully understand and welcome you to do that. You have my commitment to help Nikki achieve her goals, which include the fact that she may not choose the Army. I am completely available to you and her for any questions or assistance I can render whatever she may decide. With your permission, I will followup next week and see if I can be of further assistance and to also check on whether Nikki has made a decision. In the meantime, I invite all of you to attend our Future Soldier training function we are having this weekend. This will give all of you an opportunity to meet other families in similar situations." They agreed and seemed relieved by Sergeant Dawson's statements.

Nikki and her father attended the Future Soldier training function that Saturday. She pulled Sergeant Dawson to the side and said, "I want to thank you for coming over the other night. My family was very

impressed with the information you provided. I have to admit though; I thought you were going to pressure me to join more than you did.” Sergeant Dawson smiled and replied, “I’m not here to do that. I know that this is one of the biggest decisions you will ever make. I want you to be confident it is the right one. As with many decisions, you will never know the absolute outcome. That is why I am here. I will help you through this decision. Thanks for bringing Bill and Chuck with you today Nikki. I have an appointment with Chuck and his parents this evening and I’ll let you know how it goes. As you know, Bill is still thinking about joining and I think he will when Chuck decides to join.”

“You’re welcome. I trust you and I know you are here to help us, so it is easy to get my friends to talk with you.” Nikki replied.

A couple of weeks went by and Sergeant Dawson would see Nikki at school from time to time. Chuck and Bill both joined the Army during this time and Sergeant Dawson ensured Nikki was kept in the loop when it came to their activities. She attended both of their swearing-in ceremonies at the Military Entrance Processing Station. Whenever they met, Nikki would question him about the options he presented during the interview. She kept her *Pathway To Success* planner that he had given her with her and would refer to the time lines he mapped out at her dining room table. There were several more notes written on the time lines and it was almost becoming difficult to read. Nikki often called Sergeant Dawson and informed him that she discussed the Army with many of her friends. In fact, Nikki provided Sergeant Dawson with names and telephone numbers of three more of her friends that expressed interest in learning more about Army opportunities. It was during a ride to meet one of her referrals that Sergeant Dawson received a commitment from Nikki.

“Sergeant Dawson?” Nikki opened the conversation.

“Yes.”

“I’m ready to join the Army and become a Soldier.” Nikki announced.

“That is a very good decision Nikki. I know it is one that you have given much thought to and I am confident it is the right decision. Congratulations Nikki. I am very proud of you.”

Nikki was beaming and Sergeant Dawson knew she was happy with her decision. The following day, Sergeant Dawson started processing Nikki and she enlisted in the Army the following week. After her enlistment Sergeant Dawson ensured she was prepared for BCT. Nikki’s dad coordinated a formal ceremony with the Mayor and several other very important persons when the recruiting battalion commander promoted Nikki to private first class. He personally helped Sergeant Dawson enlist five more Future Soldiers and continues to this day to support Sergeant Dawson’s efforts to help others by referring others to him. Nikki is with her first unit located in Baumholder, Germany, and writes to Sergeant Dawson from time to time. She sends him pictures from Germany and he uses them to tell the Army story to others. One day a small package arrived from Nikki. In it was Nikki’s *Pathway To Success* planner, all tattered and worn. He turned the pages to the page containing those three simple lines that he drew one evening at a dining room table. There he saw the words *Thank You* next to a circled eArmyU registration tick mark. He knew that Nikki was well on her way to success.

DISCUSSION

63. Sergeant Dawson demonstrates many of the leadership qualities of a highly successful recruiter. Although Nikki refrained from joining the Army, the likelihood of her enlisting increased because of Sergeant Dawson’s leadership and counseling skills. More often than not, a recruiter will experience similar results as Sergeant Dawson. However, the “transformational” leader will transcend their own self-interest and focus on the interests of others like Nikki. A transformational leader will inspire and influence others to commit themselves to excellence. They realize that being a Soldier and a leader like Sergeant Dawson is what they want to do with their life. This approach to leadership takes time. Self-aware and adaptive leaders know that people make decisions of this magnitude with a commitment. They do not want others to make such decisions in haste. As time went by Sergeant Dawson earned the trust and respect of Nikki and her family. They will never forget their experience

and interaction with Sergeant Dawson. Sergeant Dawson's positive influence on Nikki is long lasting and she will pass it to those she influences. She will communicate this positive influence to everyone she meets. Nikki's father became a powerful center of influence for Sergeant Dawson because he trusted him as someone who truly cared about his daughter's future and not just about putting someone in the Army. The people influenced by Sergeant Dawson became the foundation of his success. Nikki's entire community embraced Sergeant Dawson as one of their own. They depend on him for guidance, counsel, and leadership. It begins with telling an Army story.

Glossary

ACF	Army College Fund
BCT	basic combat training
COA	course of action
JROTC	Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps
MOS	military occupational specialty
NCO	noncommissioned officer
USAREC	United States Army Recruiting Command

For the Commander:

JAMES M. PALERMO
Colonel, General Staff
Chief of Staff

Official:

BRUCE W. MORRIS
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-6

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